

Prayer is the indispensable life of the heart

BY AHMAD 'ABD AS-SALAAM



Prayer is the indispensable life of the heart

All perfect praise is due to Allâh The Almighty and prayers and peace of Allâh be upon His Messenger.

I have contemplated on the state of our prayer and that of many of those who pray. I found a close relationship between failing to take the full advantage of prayer and all of its meanings, and the current conditions of the Islamic nation and the crisis it faces; rather, the social and moral crises, psychological and military defeatism and so on.

By the same token, the conditions of everyone in his prayer are related very much to the goodness of his conditions and conduct. The more one excels in and perfects his prayer, the more excellent his conditions and conduct will be and vice versa.

One may ask: How is that?!

Answering such question may be as follows: Actually, prayer is a way of life. It is the highest rank of Al-'Ubôdiyyah (true submission and servitude) to Allâh The Almighty.

The prayer that is done in perfect submissiveness is an essential element of one's success in this life and the life to come. Allâh The Almighty says: {Successful indeed are the believers. those who offer their Salat (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.} [Surat Al-Mu`minûn 23:1-2]

{قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١) الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ} المؤمنون: ٢-١

Transliteration: Qad aflaha almu`minoon, Allatheena hum fee salatihim khashi'oon.

And it was narrated that the Messenger of Allâh, prayers and peace of Allâh be upon him, said: "Prayer is the best of prescribed things, so the one who is able to do a lot of it, let him do a lot of it." [Al-Albâni deemed it Hasan (good)]

«الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مَوْضُوعٍ فَمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ يَسْتَكْتِرَ فَلْيَسْتَكْتِرْ» حسنه الألباني

The Prophet, prayers and peace of Allâh be upon him, also said: "And the Prayer is light." [Reported by Muslim]

«والصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ» رواه مسلم

Indeed, it is a light for the slave in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

Prayer is the indispensable life of the heart

Let us touch upon the meanings of prayer quickly.

The slave's standing between the hands of Allâh The Almighty, submitting himself, in a complete state of purity, directing his heart and body towards his Lord, entering the prayer saying Takbeer of his Lord: Allâhu Akbar, Allâh The Almighty is really the Greatest of all things, His Command is the greatest of all things, then opens his prayer with acknowledging his sins and seeking forgiveness for his sins: "O Allâh, put a great distance between me and my sins, as great as the distance You have made between the East and the West. O Allâh, cleanse me of sin as a white garment is cleansed from filth. O Allâh, wash away my sins with snow and water and hail." [Agreed upon]

«اللَّهُمَّ بَاعِدْ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَ خَطَايَايَ كَمَا بَاعَدْتَ بَيْنَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ اللَّهُمَّ تَقْنِي مِنْ خَطَايَايَ كَمَا يُتَّقَى الثَّوْبُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلْني مِنْ خَطَايَايَ بِالثَّلْجِ وَالْمَاءِ وَالْبَرَدِ» متفق عليه

Transliteration: Allâhumma bâ'id bayni wa bayna khatâyaya kama bâ'adta bayna al-mashriqi wal-maghrib. Allâhumma naqqini min khatâyaya kama yunaqqa al-thawb al-abyad min al-danas. Allâhumma ighsilni min khatâyaya bil-thalji wal-mâ`i wal-barad

Do you think that if the slave really understands such meanings, will he commit a sin intentionally or insist on it?

Then he will seek refuge with Allâh The Almighty from the devil, then recite Al-Fâtihah (opening chapter of the Noble Quran) which is also called Umm Al-Kitâb (the Mother of the Book) for it combines the meanings of Imân (faith) and Tawheed (monotheism) such as praising Allâh The Almighty, commending Him, glorifying Him, dedicating worship for Him alone, seeking help from Him alone, acknowledging the Hereafter and the King of the Day of Recompense, asking his Lord for guidance only for it is the way of the Prophets, may Allâh exalt their mention, and the believers, and toward him off the way of those who earned His anger, nor of those who went astray of the Jews, the Christians and those who are like them.

Then the slave after finishing his recitation, he bows for his Lord saying: Subhâna Rabbi al-'Adheem (Glory be to my Lord the Almighty), Does not the slave have to realize that such glorification, bowing and physical submission, verbal glorification indicate that the slave should submit totally to his Great Lord in all things and not to prefer his desires, whims and opinions to what Allâh The Almighty has prescribed for His slaves.

Prayer is the indispensable life of the heart

How strange! The slave performs his prayer and comes out of it acknowledging other than the religion of Allâh The Almighty and exploring every possible avenue to go against the Commands of Allâh The Almighty. I think he is still far away from reaching such noble meanings.

Contemplate thoughtfully on rising from bowing, praising and glorifying Allâh The Almighty alone saying: "O Allâh, our Lord, praise is Yours, (A praise that) fills the heavens and the earth, and whatever else You please. (You Allâh) are most worthy of praise and majesty, there is none who can withhold what You give, and none may give what You have withheld. And the might of the mighty person cannot benefit him against You." [Muslim]

«اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلْءُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمِلْءُ الْأَرْضِ وَمِلْءُ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ أَهْلَ الثَّنَاءِ وَالْمَجْدِ لَا مَانِعَ لِمَا أَعْطَيْتَ وَلَا مُعْطِيٍّ لِمَا مَنَعْتَ وَلَا يَنْفَعُ ذَا الْجَدِّ مِنْكَ الْجَدُّ» رواه مسلم

Transliteration: Allâhumma Rabbanaa lakal-hamd, Mil` as-samâwâti wa mil` al`-`arddi, wa mil` a mâ shi` ta min shay` in ba`d. Ahi ath-thanâ`i wal majdi, Lâ mânî`a lima `a`tayta, wa laa mu`tiya limaa mana`ta, wa lâ yanfa`u thal-jaddi mink al-jadd.

Then he falls down in prostration for Allâh The Almighty. He places the noblest parts of his body and the noblest things he has; his nose and forehead, on the ground for Allâh The Almighty, humbling, submitting, yielding, and surrendering himself saying: Subhana Rabbiy al-`A`lâ (Glory be to my Lord Most High). Had a Muslim been given enormous money to prostrate to other than Allâh The Almighty, he surely would have refused to do so. In prostration, there is a kind of remedy for the malady of arrogance, pride and haughtiness. In it, the slave learns how to humble and humiliate himself for Allâh The Almighty and that entails him also to humble and be good with His slaves.

In his prayer, he testifies the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad, prayers and peace of Allâh be upon him, and sends peace and blessings on him.

Actually, such prayer and such great meanings imply what prevents one from doing immorality and bad conduct. Allâh The Almighty says: {Verily, As-Salaat (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahshaa' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse, etc.) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism, and every kind of evil wicked deed, etc.)} [Al-'Ankaboot 29:45]

{وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ الْعَنْكَبُوتُ: ٤٥}

Prayer is the indispensable life of the heart

Transliteration: waaqimi alassalata Inna assalata tanha `ani alfahsha`i wal munkari.

As much as the one who performs prayer fails to realize such meanings, he will fail also to avoid immorality and bad conduct. Accordingly, the real flaw is in the slave and his understanding, not in the prayers at all.

Consequently, the prayer implies the perfect submissiveness and servitude.

It also implies:

- Praising and glorifying of Allâh The Almighty with his Names and Attributes,
- Disassociation of disbelief and its people,
- Acknowledging sins,
- Putting full trust on Allâh The Almighty and humbleness,
- Disassociation of power and strength except with Allâh The Almighty.
- Submissiveness, yielding, surrendering and humbleness to Allâh The Almighty, and
- Testifying the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad, prayers and peace of Allâh be upon him.

Is not that a way of life for the Muslim individual to know that he has a Lord and God Who owns the whole universe and controls all of its affairs.

If the slave comprehends such meanings in his prayers, surely he will get out of it in a different way and with a new light and will also submit totally to his Lord throughout his life. Furthermore, he will not have the nerve to annual the texts of the sacred revelation; sometimes with explicit violation while in some other times with denying and distorting them. Prayer is a way of life that can reform the belief, soul, conduct, moral and the course of every slave

We ask Allâh The Almighty sincerely to make us among the establishers of prayer.

By Ahmad `Abd As-Salaam
Source: www.salafvoice.com